



THE STATUTES OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

**MAINTENANCE ORDERS (RECIPROCAL
ENFORCEMENT) ACT**

(CHAPTER 169)

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Maintenance Orders (Reciprocal Enforcement) Act

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An Act to make provision for the enforcement in Singapore of maintenance orders made in reciprocating countries and vice versa.

[3rd May 1976*]

PART I

PRELIMINARY

Short title and commencement

1.—(1) This Act may be cited as the Maintenance Orders (Reciprocal Enforcement) Act and shall come into operation on such date as the Minister may, by notification in the *Gazette*, appoint.

(2) The Minister may appoint different dates for the coming into operation of the different provisions of this Act.

[8/76]

Interpretation

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires —

“affiliation order” means an order (however described) adjudging, finding or declaring a person to be the father of a child, whether or not it also provides for the maintenance of the child;

* Section 19(1) comes into operation on 1 January 2017 (S 607/2016).

“certificate of arrears”, in relation to a maintenance order, means a certificate certifying that the sums specified in the certificate is to the best of the information or belief of the officer giving the certificate the amount of the arrears due under the order at the date of the certificate or, as the case may be, that to the best of his information or belief there are no arrears due thereunder at that date;

“certified copy”, in relation to an order of court, means a copy of the order certified by the proper officer of the court to be a true copy;

“court” includes any tribunal or person having power to make, confirm, enforce, vary or revoke a maintenance order that is enforceable by a civil court of competent jurisdiction;

[Act 2 of 2012 wef 30/09/2014]

“maintenance order” means an order (however described) of the following descriptions:

(a) an order (including an affiliation order or order consequent upon an affiliation order) which provides for the payment of a lump sum or the making of periodical payments —

(i) by a man towards the maintenance of his wife or former wife; or

(ii) by a person towards the maintenance of his child; and

[Act 2 of 2012 wef 30/09/2014]

(b) an affiliation order or order consequent upon an affiliation order, being an order which provides for the payment by a person adjudged, found or declared to be a child’s father of expenses incidental to the child’s birth or, where the child had died, of his funeral expenses,

and in the case of a maintenance order which has been varied, means that order as varied;

“payee”, in relation to a maintenance order, means the person entitled to the payments for which the order provides;

“payer”, in relation to a maintenance order, means the person liable to make payments under the order;

“provisional order” means (according to the context) —

(a) an order made by a court in Singapore which is provisional only and has no effect unless confirmed, with or without alteration, by a competent court in a reciprocating country; or

(b) an order made by a court in a reciprocating country which is provisional only and has no effect unless confirmed with or without alteration, by a court in Singapore having power under this Act to confirm it;

“reciprocating country” has the meaning assigned to it by section 17;

“registered order” means a maintenance order which is for the time being registered in a court in Singapore under this Act;

“registering court”, in relation to a registered order, means the court in which that order is for the time being registered under this Act;

“responsible authority”, in relation to a reciprocating country, means any person who in that country has functions similar to those of the Minister under this Act.

PART II

ORDERS MADE BY COURTS IN SINGAPORE

Transmission of maintenance order made in Singapore for enforcement in reciprocating country

3.—(1) Where the payer under a maintenance order made, whether before or after the commencement of this Act, by a court in Singapore is residing in a reciprocating country, the payee under the order may apply for the order to be sent to that country for enforcement.

(2) Every application under this section shall be made in the prescribed manner to the prescribed officer of the court which made the maintenance order to which the application relates.

(3) If, on an application duly made under this section to the prescribed officer of a court in Singapore, that officer is satisfied that the payer under the maintenance order to which the application relates is residing in a reciprocating country, the following documents:

- (a) a certified copy of the maintenance order;
- (b) a certificate signed by that officer certifying that the order is enforceable in Singapore;
- (c) a certificate of arrears so signed;
- (d) a statement giving such information as the officer possesses as to the whereabouts of the payer;
- (e) a statement giving such information as the officer possesses for facilitating the identification of the payer; and
- (f) where available, a photograph of the payer,

shall be sent by that officer to the Minister with a view to their being transmitted by the Minister to the responsible authority in the reciprocating country if he is satisfied that the statement relating to the whereabouts of the payer gives sufficient information to justify that being done.

(4) Nothing in this section shall be taken as affecting any jurisdiction of a court in Singapore with respect to a maintenance order to which this section applies, and any such order may be enforced, varied or revoked accordingly.

Power to make provisional maintenance order against person residing in reciprocating country

4.—(1) Where a complaint is made to a Family Court against a person residing in a reciprocating country and the complaint is one on which such court would have jurisdiction by virtue of any enactment to make a maintenance order if —

- (a) that person were residing in Singapore; and
- (b) a summons to appear before such court to answer to the complaint had been duly served on him,

the court shall have jurisdiction to hear the complaint and may, subject to subsection (2), make a maintenance order on the complaint.

[Act 27 of 2014 wef 01/10/2014]

(2) A maintenance order made by virtue of this section shall be a provisional order.

(3) *[Deleted by Act 2 of 2012 wef 30/09/2014]*

(4) No enactment empowering a Family Court to refuse to make an order on a complaint on the ground that the matter in question is one which would be more conveniently dealt with by the General Division of the High Court shall apply in relation to a complaint to which subsection (1) applies.

[Act 27 of 2014 wef 01/10/2014]

[Act 40 of 2019 wef 02/01/2021]

(5) Where a Family Court makes a maintenance order which is by virtue of this section a provisional order, the following documents:

- (a) a certified copy of the maintenance order;
- (b) a document, authenticated in the prescribed manner, setting out or summarising the evidence given in the proceedings;
- (c) a certificate signed by the prescribed officer of the court certifying that the grounds stated in the certificate are the grounds on which the making of the order might have been opposed by the payer under the order;
- (d) a statement giving such information as was available to the court as to the whereabouts of the payer;
- (e) a statement giving such information as the officer possesses for facilitating the identification of the payer; and
- (f) where available, a photograph of the payer,

shall be sent by that officer to the Minister with a view to their being transmitted by the Minister to the responsible authority in the reciprocating country in which the payer is residing if he is satisfied

that the statement relating to the whereabouts of the payer gives sufficient information to justify that being done.

[Act 27 of 2014 wef 01/10/2014]

(6) A maintenance order made by virtue of this section which has been confirmed by a competent court in a reciprocating country shall be treated for all purposes as if the Family Court which made the order had made it in the form in which it was confirmed and as if the order had never been a provisional order, and subject to section 5, any such order may be enforced, varied or revoked accordingly.

[Act 27 of 2014 wef 01/10/2014]

Variation and revocation of maintenance order made in Singapore

5.—(1) This section applies to a maintenance order a certified copy of which has been sent to a reciprocating country in pursuance of section 3 and to a maintenance order made by virtue of section 4 which has been confirmed by a competent court in such a country.

(2) A court in Singapore having power to vary a maintenance order to which this section applies shall have power to vary that order by a provisional order.

(3) Where the court hearing an application for the variation of a maintenance order to which this section applies proposes to vary it by increasing the rate of the payments under the order then, unless either —

- (a) both the payer and the payee under the order appear in the proceedings; or
- (b) the applicant appears and the appropriate process has been duly served on the other party,

the order varying the order shall be a provisional order.

(4) Where a court in Singapore makes a provisional order varying a maintenance order to which this section applies, the prescribed officer of the court shall send in the prescribed manner to the court in a reciprocating country having power to confirm the provisional order a certified copy of the provisional order together with a document, authenticated in the prescribed manner, setting out or summarising the evidence given in the proceedings.

(5) Where a certified copy of a provisional order made by a court in a reciprocating country, being an order varying or revoking a maintenance order to which this section applies, together with a document, duly authenticated, setting out or summarising the evidence given in the proceedings in which the provisional order was made, is received by the court in Singapore which made the maintenance order, that court may confirm or refuse to confirm the provisional order and, if that order is an order varying the maintenance order, confirm it either without alteration or with such alterations as it thinks reasonable.

(6) For the purpose of determining whether a provisional order should be confirmed under subsection (5), the court shall proceed as if an application for the variation or revocation, as the case may be, of the maintenance order in question had been made to it.

(7) Where a maintenance order to which this section applies has been varied by an order (including a provisional order which has been confirmed) made by a court in Singapore or by a competent court in a reciprocating country, the maintenance order shall, as from the date on which under the provisions of the order the variation is to take effect, have effect as varied by that order and, where that order was a provisional order, as if that order had been made in the form in which it was confirmed and as if it had never been a provisional order.

[Act 2 of 2012 wef 30/09/2014]

(8) Where a maintenance order to which this section applies has been revoked by an order made by a court in Singapore or by a competent court in a reciprocating country, including a provisional order made by the last-mentioned court which has been confirmed by a court in Singapore, the maintenance order shall, as from the date on which under the provisions of the order the revocation is to take effect, be deemed to have ceased to have effect except as respects any arrears due under the maintenance order at that date.

[Act 2 of 2012 wef 30/09/2014]

(9) Where before a maintenance order made by virtue of section 4 is confirmed a document, duly authenticated, setting out or summarising evidence taken in a reciprocating country for the purpose of proceedings relating to the confirmation of the order is received by the court in Singapore which made the order, or that

court, in compliance with a request made to it by a court in such a country, takes the evidence of a person residing in Singapore for the purpose of those proceedings, the court in Singapore which made the order shall consider that evidence and if, having done so, it appears to it that the order ought not to have been made —

- (a) it shall, in such manner as may be prescribed, give to the person on whose application the maintenance order was made an opportunity to consider that evidence, to make representations with respect to it and to adduce further evidence; and
- (b) after considering all the evidence and any representations made by that person, it may revoke the maintenance order.

PART III

ORDERS MADE BY COURTS IN RECIPROCATING COUNTRIES

Registration in Singapore court of maintenance order made in reciprocating country

6.—(1) This section applies to a maintenance order made, whether before or after the commencement of this Act, by a court in a reciprocating country, including such an order made by such a court which has been confirmed by a court in another reciprocating country but excluding a provisional order which has not been confirmed.

(2) Where a certified copy of an order to which this section applies is received by the Minister from the responsible authority in a reciprocating country, and it appears to the Minister that the payer under the order is residing in Singapore, he shall send the copy of the order to the prescribed officer of the appropriate court.

(3) Where the prescribed officer of the appropriate court receives from the Minister a certified copy of an order to which this section applies, he shall, subject to subsection (4), register the order in the prescribed manner in that court.

(4) Before registering an order under this section, an officer of a court shall take such steps as he thinks fit for the purpose of

ascertaining whether the payer under the order is residing within the jurisdiction of the court, and if after taking those steps he is satisfied that the payer is not so residing he shall return the certified copy of the order to the Minister with a statement giving such information as he possesses as to the whereabouts of the payer.

Confirmation by Singapore court of provisional maintenance order made in reciprocating country

7.—(1) This section applies to a maintenance order made, whether before or after the commencement of this Act, by a court in a reciprocating country being a provisional order.

(2) Where a certified copy of an order to which this section applies together with —

- (a) a document, duly authenticated, setting out or summarising the evidence given in the proceedings in which the order was made; and
- (b) a statement of the grounds on which the making of the order might have been opposed by the payer under the order,

is received by the Minister from the responsible authority in a reciprocating country, and it appears to the Minister that the payer under the order is residing in Singapore, he shall send the copy of the order and documents which accompanied it to the prescribed officer of the appropriate court, and that court shall —

- (i) if the payer under the order establishes any grounds on which he might have opposed the making of the order in the proceedings in which the order was made, refuse to confirm the order; and

[Act 2 of 2012 wef 30/09/2014]

- (ii) in any other case, confirm the order either without alteration or with such alterations as it thinks reasonable.

(3) In any proceedings for the confirmation under this section of a provisional order, the statement received from the court which made the order of the grounds on which the making of the order might have been opposed by the payer under the order shall be conclusive

evidence that the payer might have opposed the making of the order on any of those grounds in the proceedings in which the order was made.

[Act 2 of 2012 wef 30/09/2014]

(4) For the purpose of determining whether a provisional order should be confirmed under this section, the court shall proceed as if an application for a maintenance order against the payer under the provisional order had been made to it.

(5) The prescribed officer of a court having power under this section to confirm a provisional order shall, if the court confirms the order, register the order in the prescribed manner in that court, and shall, if the court refuses to confirm the order, return the certified copy of the order and the documents which accompanied it to the Minister.

(6) If a summons to appear in the proceedings for the confirmation of the provisional order cannot be duly served on the payer under that order, the officer by whom the certified copy of the order was received shall return that copy and the documents which accompanied it to the Minister with a statement giving such information as he possesses as to the whereabouts of the payer.

Enforcement of maintenance order registered in a Singapore court

8.—(1) A registered order may be enforced in Singapore as if it has been made by the registering court and as if that court has had jurisdiction to make it; and proceedings for or with respect to the enforcement of any such order may be taken accordingly.

(2) A registered order which has been registered or confirmed by a Family Court (or any other court in Singapore) shall be enforceable as if the order had been made under Part VIII of the Women's Charter (Cap. 353).

[Act 27 of 2014 wef 01/10/2014]

(2A) To avoid doubt, section 121 of the Women's Charter applies to a registered order which has been registered or confirmed by a Family Court (or any other court in Singapore) with the following modifications:

- (a) the reference in section 121(3) of the Women's Charter to a suit is to be read as a reference to an application to enforce the registered order in accordance with section 71 of the Women's Charter;
- (b) the reference in section 121(3) of the Women's Charter to the institution of the suit is to be read as a reference to the filing of the application to enforce the registered order.

[Act 16 of 2016 wef 10/06/2016]

(3) Any person for the time being under an obligation to make payments in pursuance of a registered order shall give notice of any change of address to the clerk of the registering court, and any person failing without reasonable excuse to give such a notice shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$500.

(4) The Family Court by which an order is enforceable by virtue of this section, and the officers thereof, shall take all such steps for enforcing the order as may be prescribed.

[Act 27 of 2014 wef 01/10/2014]

(5) In any proceedings for or with respect to the enforcement of an order which is for the time being registered in any court under this Act a certificate of arrears sent to the prescribed officer of the court shall be evidence of the facts stated therein.

(6) Subject to subsection (7), sums of money payable under a registered order shall be payable in accordance with the order as from the date on which the order was made.

(7) The court having power under section 7 to confirm a provisional order may, if it decides to confirm the order, direct that the sums of money payable under the order shall be deemed to have been payable in accordance with the order as from such date, being a date later than the date on which the order was made, as it may specify; and subject to any such direction, a maintenance order registered under that section shall be treated as if it had been made in the form in which it was confirmed and as if it had never been a provisional order.

Variation and revocation of maintenance order registered in a Singapore court

9.—(1) Subject to this section, the registering court —

- (a) shall have the like power, on an application made by the payer or payee under a registered order, to vary or revoke the order as if that court had had jurisdiction to make it; and
- (b) shall have power to vary or revoke a registered order by a provisional order.

(2) The registering court shall not vary a registered order otherwise than by a provisional order unless —

- (a) both the payer and the payee under the registered order are for the time being residing in Singapore;
- (b) the application is made by the payee under the registered order; or
- (c) the variation consists of a reduction in the rate of the payments under the registered order and is made solely on the ground that there has been a change in the financial circumstances of the payer since the registered order was made or, in the case of an order registered under section 7, since the registered order was confirmed, and the courts in the reciprocating country in which the maintenance order in question was made do not have power, according to the law in force in that country, to confirm provisional orders varying maintenance orders.

(3) The registering court shall not revoke a registered order otherwise than by a provisional order unless both the payer and the payee under the registered order are for the time being residing in Singapore.

(4) On an application for the revocation of a registered order, the registering court shall, unless both the payer and the payee under the registered order are for the time being residing in Singapore, apply the law applied by the reciprocating country in which the registered order was made; but where by virtue of this subsection the registering court is required to apply that law, that court may make a provisional

order if it has reason to believe that the ground on which the application is made is a ground on which the order could be revoked according to the law applied by the reciprocating country, notwithstanding that it has not been established that it is such a ground.

(5) Where the registering court makes a provisional order varying or revoking a registered order, the prescribed officer of the court shall send in the prescribed manner to the court in the reciprocating country which made the registered order a certified copy of the provisional order together with a document, authenticated in the prescribed manner, setting out or summarising the evidence given in the proceedings.

(6) Where a certified copy of a provisional order made by a court in a reciprocating country, being an order varying a registered order, together with a document, duly authenticated, setting out or summarising the evidence given in the proceedings in which the provisional order was made, is received by the registering court, that court may confirm the order either without alteration or with such alterations as it thinks reasonable or refuse to confirm the order.

(7) For the purpose of determining whether a provisional order should be confirmed under subsection (6), the court shall proceed as if an application for the variation of the registered order had been made to it.

(8) Where a registered order has been varied by an order (including a provisional order which has been confirmed) made by a court in Singapore or by a competent court in a reciprocating country, the registered order shall, as from the date on which under the provisions of the order the variation is to take effect, have effect as varied by that order and, where that order was a provisional order, as if that order had been made in the form in which it was confirmed and as if it had never been a provisional order.

[Act 2 of 2012 wef 30/09/2014]

(9) Where a registered order has been revoked by an order made by a court in Singapore or by a competent court in a reciprocating country, including a provisional order made by the first-mentioned court which has been confirmed by a competent court in a

reciprocating country, the registered order shall, as from the date on which under the provisions of the order the revocation is to take effect, be deemed to have ceased to have effect except as respects any arrears due under the registered order at that date.

[Act 2 of 2012 wef 30/09/2014]

(10) The prescribed officer of the registering court shall register in the prescribed manner any order varying a registered order other than a provisional order which is not confirmed.

Cancellation of registration of order

10.—(1) Where a registered order is revoked by —

- (a) an order made by the registering court;
- (b) a provisional order made by that court which has been confirmed by a court in a reciprocating country and notice of the confirmation is received by the registering court; or
- (c) an order made by a court in such a country and notice of the revocation is received by the registering court,

the prescribed officer of the registering court shall cancel the registration; but any arrears due under the registered order at the date when its registration is cancelled by virtue of this subsection shall continue to be recoverable as if the registration had not been cancelled.

(2) Where the prescribed officer of the registering court is of the opinion that the payer under a registered order has ceased to reside within the jurisdiction of that court, he shall cancel the registration of the order and send the certified copy of the order to the Minister.

Steps to be taken by the Minister where payer under certain orders is not residing in Singapore

11. If at any time it appears to the Minister that the payer under a maintenance order, a certified copy of which has been received by him from a reciprocating country, is not residing in Singapore or, in the case of an order which subsequently became a registered order, has ceased to reside therein, he shall send to the responsible authority in that country —

- (a) the certified copy of the order in question and a certified copy of any order varying that order;
- (b) if the order has at any time been a registered order, a certificate of arrears signed by the prescribed officer;
- (c) a statement giving such information as the Minister possesses as to the whereabouts of the payer; and
- (d) any other relevant documents in his possession relating to the case.

[Act 2 of 2012 wef 30/09/2014]

PART IV

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Appeals

12.—(1) An applicant shall have the same right of appeal, if any, against a refusal by a court in Singapore to make a provisional order under any provision of this Act as he would have had against a refusal to make the order had a summons been duly served on the person against whom the order is sought to be made.

(2) Where in pursuance of any such provision any such court confirms or refuses to confirm a provisional order made by a court in a reciprocating country, whether a maintenance order or an order varying or revoking a maintenance order, the payer or payee under the maintenance order shall have the like right of appeal (if any) from the confirmation of, or refusal to confirm, the provisional order as he would have if that order were not a provisional order and the court which confirmed or refused to confirm it had made or, as the case may be, refused to make it.

(3) Where in pursuance of any such provision any such court makes, or refuses to make, an order varying or revoking a maintenance order made by a court in a reciprocating country, then, subject to subsection (1), the payer or payee under the maintenance order shall have the like right of appeal (if any) from that order or from the refusal to make it as he would have if the maintenance order had been made by the first-mentioned court.

(4) Nothing in this section (except subsection (1)) shall be construed as affecting any right of appeal conferred by any other written law.

Admissibility of evidence given in reciprocating country

13.—(1) A statement contained in —

- (a) a document, duly authenticated, which purports to set out or summarise evidence given in proceedings in a court in a reciprocating country;
- (b) a document, duly authenticated, which purports to set out or summarise evidence taken in such a country for the purpose of proceedings in a court in Singapore under this Act, whether in response to a request made by such a court or otherwise; or
- (c) a document, duly authenticated, which purports to have been received in evidence in proceedings in a court in such a country or to be a copy of a document so received,

shall in any proceedings in a court in Singapore relating to a maintenance order to which this Act applies be admissible as evidence of any fact stated therein to the same extent as oral evidence of that fact is admissible in those proceedings.

(2) A document purporting to set out or summarise evidence given as mentioned in subsection (1)(a), or taken as mentioned in subsection (1)(b), shall be deemed to be duly authenticated for the purposes of that subsection if the document purports to be certified by the judge, magistrate or other person before whom the evidence was given, or, as the case may be, by whom it was taken, to be the original document containing or recording, or, as the case may be, summarising, that evidence or a true copy of that document.

(3) A document purporting to have been received in evidence as mentioned in subsection (1)(c), or to be a copy of a document so received, shall be deemed to be duly authenticated for the purposes of that subsection if the document purports to be certified by a judge, magistrate or an officer of the court in question to have been, or to be a true copy of a document which has been, so received.

(4) It shall not be necessary in any such proceedings to prove the signature or official position of the person appearing to have given such a certificate.

(5) Nothing in this section shall prejudice the admission in evidence of any document which is admissible in evidence apart from this section.

Obtaining of evidence needed for purpose of certain proceedings

14.—(1) Where for the purpose of any proceedings in a court in a reciprocating country relating to a maintenance order to which this Act applies a request is made by or on behalf of that court for the taking in Singapore of the evidence of a person residing therein relating to matters specified in the request, such court in Singapore as may be prescribed shall have power to take that evidence and, after giving notice of the time and place at which the evidence is to be taken to such persons and in such manner as it thinks fit, shall take the evidence in such manner as may be prescribed.

(2) Evidence taken in compliance with such a request shall be sent in the prescribed manner by the prescribed officer of the court to the court in the reciprocating country by or on behalf of which the request was made.

(3) Where any person, not being the payer or the payee under the maintenance order to which the proceedings in question relate, is required by virtue of this section to give evidence before a court in Singapore, the court may order that there shall be paid out of moneys provided by Parliament such sums as appear to the court reasonably sufficient to compensate that person for the expense, trouble or loss of time properly incurred in or incidental to his attendance.

(4) A court in Singapore may for the purpose of any proceedings in that court under this Act relating to a maintenance order to which this Act applies request a court in a reciprocating country to take or provide evidence relating to such matters as may be specified in the request and may remit the case to that court for that purpose.

Order, etc., made abroad need not be proved

15. For the purposes of this Act, unless the contrary is shown —

- (a) any order made by a court in a reciprocating country purporting to bear the seal of that court or to be signed by any person in his capacity as a judge, magistrate or officer of the court, shall be deemed without further proof to have been duly sealed or, as the case may be, to have been signed by that person;
- (b) the person by whom the order was signed shall be deemed without further proof to have been a judge, magistrate or officer, as the case may be, of that court when he signed it and, in the case of an officer, to have been authorised to sign it; and
- (c) a document purporting to be a certified copy of an order made by a court in a reciprocating country shall be deemed without further proof to be such a copy.

Payment of sums under orders made abroad; conversion of currency

16.—(1) Payments of sums due under a registered order shall, while the order is registered in a court in Singapore, be made in such manner and to such person as may be prescribed.

(2) Where the sums required to be paid under a registered order are expressed in a currency other than the currency of Singapore, then, as from the relevant date, the order shall be treated as if it were an order requiring the payment of such sums in the currency of Singapore as, on the basis of the rate of exchange prevailing at that date, are equivalent to the sums so required to be paid.

(3) Where the sum specified in any statement, being a statement of the amount of any arrears due under a maintenance order made by a court in a reciprocating country, is expressed in a currency other than the currency of Singapore, that sum shall be deemed to be such sum in the currency of Singapore as, on the basis of the rate of exchange prevailing at the relevant date, is equivalent to the sum so specified.

(4) For the purposes of this section, a written certificate purporting to be signed by an officer of any bank in Singapore certifying that a specified rate of exchange prevailed between currencies at a specified date and that at such rate a specified sum in the currency of Singapore is equivalent to a specified sum in another specified currency shall be evidence of the rate of exchange so prevailing on that date and of the equivalent sums in terms of the respective currencies.

(5) In this section, “the relevant date” means —

- (a) in relation to a registered order or to a statement of arrears due under a maintenance order made by a court in a reciprocating country, the date on which the order first becomes a registered order or (if earlier) the date on which it is confirmed by a court in Singapore; and
- (b) in relation to a registered order which has been varied, the date on which the last order varying that order is registered in a court in Singapore or (if earlier) the date on which the last order varying that order is confirmed by such a court.

Minister may designate a country to be a reciprocating country

17.—(1) Where the Minister is satisfied that, in the event of the benefits conferred by this Act being applied to, or to particular classes of, maintenance orders made by the court of any country or territory outside Singapore, similar benefits will in that country or territory be applied to, or to those classes of, maintenance orders made by the courts of Singapore, the Minister may, by notification in the *Gazette*, designate that country or territory as a reciprocating country for the purposes of this Act, and subject to subsection (2), “reciprocating country” means a country or territory that is for the time being so designated.

(2) A country or territory may be designated under subsection (1) as a reciprocating country either as regards maintenance orders generally, or as regards maintenance orders other than those of any specified class, or as regards maintenance orders of one or more specified classes only; and a country or territory which is for the time being so designated otherwise than as regards maintenance orders generally shall for the purposes of this Act be taken to be a

reciprocating country only as regards maintenance orders of the class to which the designation extends.

Family Justice Rules

18.—(1) The Family Justice Rules Committee constituted under section 46(1) of the Family Justice Act 2014 (Act 27 of 2014) may make Family Justice Rules to regulate and prescribe the procedure and practice to be followed in proceedings under this Act and any matters incidental to or relating to any such procedure or practice.

(2) Without affecting the generality of subsection (1), Family Justice Rules may be made to prescribe —

(a) the manner in which any application under this Act is to be made; and

(b) the fees payable in relation to proceedings under this Act.

(3) The Family Justice Rules may, instead of providing for any matter, refer to any provision made or to be made about that matter by practice directions issued for the time being by the registrar of the Family Justice Courts.

(4) All Family Justice Rules made under this section are to be presented to Parliament as soon as possible after publication in the *Gazette*.

[Act 16 of 2016 wef 01/01/2017]

Regulations

18A.—(1) The Minister may make regulations for giving effect to the provisions and purposes of this Act and for the due administration of this Act.

(2) The powers conferred by this section do not extend to any matter for which the Family Justice Rules mentioned in section 18 may be made.

[Act 16 of 2016 wef 01/01/2017]

Repeal and transitional provisions

19.—(1) The Maintenance Orders (Facilities for Enforcement) Act [Cap. 168] (referred to in this section as the repealed Act) is hereby repealed.*

(2) Where the Minister proposes by a notification in the *Gazette* under section 17 to designate as a reciprocating country a country or territory to which at the commencement of that section the repealed Act extended, that notification may contain such provisions as the Minister considers expedient for the purposes of securing —

- (a) that the provisions of this Act applied, subject to such modifications as may be specified in the notification, to maintenance orders, or maintenance orders of a specified class —
 - (i) made by a court in Singapore against a person residing in that country or territory; or
 - (ii) made by a court in that country or territory against a person residing in Singapore,being orders to which immediately before the date of the commencement of the notification the repealed Act applied;
- (b) that any maintenance order, or maintenance order of a specified class, made by a court in that country or territory which has been confirmed by a court in Singapore under section 6 of the repealed Act and is in force immediately before that date is registered under section 7 of this Act; and
- (c) that any proceedings brought under or by virtue of a provision under the repealed Act in a court in Singapore which are pending at that date, being proceedings affecting a person resident in that country or territory, are continued as if they had been brought under or by virtue of the corresponding provision of this Act.

* Section 19(1) comes into operation on 1 January 2017 (S 607/2016).

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY
MAINTENANCE ORDERS (RECIPROCAL ENFORCEMENT)
ACT
(CHAPTER 169)

This Legislative History is provided for the convenience of users of the Maintenance Orders (Reciprocal Enforcement) Act. It is not part of the Act.

1. Act 23 of 1975 — Maintenance Orders (Reciprocal Enforcement) Act 1975

Date of First Reading	:	17 March 1975 (Bill No. 20/1975 published on 18 March 1975)
Date of Second and Third Readings	:	29 July 1975
Date of commencement	:	3 May 1976 (except section 19(1))

2. Act 8 of 1976 — Maintenance Orders (Reciprocal Enforcement) (Amendment) Act

Date of First Reading	:	1 March 1976 (Bill No. 4/1976 published on 5 March 1976)
Date of Second and Third Readings	:	25 March 1976
Date of commencement	:	3 May 1976

3. 1985 Revised Edition — Maintenance Orders (Reciprocal Enforcement) Act

Date of operation	:	30 March 1987
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4. Act 2 of 2012 — Statutes (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act 2012

Date of First Reading	:	21 November 2011 (Bill No. 22/2011 published on 21 November 2011)
Date of Second and Third Readings	:	18 January 2012
Date of commencement	:	30 September 2014

5. Act 27 of 2014 — Family Justice Act 2014

Date of First Reading	:	8 July 2014 (Bill No. 21/2014)
Date of Second and Third Readings	:	4 August 2014

Date of commencement : 1 October 2014

6. Act 16 of 2016 — Statutes (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act 2016

Date of First Reading : 14 April 2016 (Bill No. 15/2016
published on 14 April 2016)

Date of Second and Third Readings : 9 May 2016

Date of commencement : 10 June 2016
1 January 2017

7. Act 40 of 2019 — Supreme Court of Judicature (Amendment) Act 2019

Date of First Reading : 7 October 2019 (Bill No.
32/2019 published on 7 October
2019)

Date of Second and Third Readings : 5 November 2019

Date of commencement : 2 January 2021